A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, December 23. 1710

IN My laſt, I gave you ſome Account of the Frights and Diſorder, which Credit, that Incomparable Lady, that Beauty of our Age has ſuffer'd, in theſe Days of General Confuſion among us; indeed, when the Tumults and Riots of the Time are conſider'd, the Heaving and Thruſting, the Caveling and Clamouring of Parties that have been among us; it is more a wonder that we have any Credit at all left, than that ſhe has been at a low Ebb, and made but a mean Figure in the Nation.

I would fain ſpeak here, if I might have leave, to the proper Means for the Reſtoring our Credit, for regaining the Favour of this incomparable Lady, and for obtaining her Smiles and Bleſſings upon our Affairs; unhappy Times we live in! Reproach loads the Man that ſpeaks his plain Thoughts, let him go which Way he will; the Author of this, who has always declar'd his Abhorrence of Time-ſerving, and who ſcorns to write a Line, meerly to please the Greateſt Man in the World, cannot ſpeak the moſt neceſſary Truth in a Language that does not pleaſe you, but ſtill you think it is to pleaſe your Enemies.

Accurſed by all the Nation's Friends be that Flatterer, that fears the Face of his Country's Enemies ſo much, that he dare not ſpeak Truth in the Teeth of the great-

eſt Authority; and accurſed from Heaven be thoſe Slanderers, who Partial to their own Notions, accuſe any Man Wrongfully of abandoning Truth, becauſe he Publiſhes that Truth, in oppoſition to their Ignorant Opinion.

Theſe are Times to ſpeak plain; the Wounds of the State mortifie every Day, and muſt be cur'd by Inciſion; I ſhall ſpare none that oppoſe themſelves to the Honour or Intereſt of their Country, that forbear to Reverence the Face of Truth, let them be of what Party, Profeſſion, Character, Dignity, or Society in the World; while I ſpeak honeſtly the diſintereſted Language of Truth, why ſhould I apprehend any Body's Reſentment? Be they in Parliament or out, in Convocations or out, in Counſels, Cities, States, or whatever Bodys of Men are to be ſpoken of, needful Truth ought not to offend them, and whatever Miſchief, Ruin, or Diſaſter, may befal me for it, I muſt run the riſque of that —— Let them that ſay I flatter or ſerve a Party, go my length, if they think fit, till they dare venture as I do, I regard not their Reproach.

I am Diſcourſing of the National Credit, I mean Credit of Caſh, I do not mean Credit of Character, tho' I could ſpeak as plainly to that too —— And indeed there is need enough for that; and were I to ſpeak to that kind of Credit, I will tell you where I would begin; I would Addreſs my ſelf to the Convocation now ſitting, and tell them with all Decency and Reſpect, that if they would ever reſtore the Credit of Religion, and the juſt Veneration of the Church of *England*; if they would ever deliver the Conſtitution of the Church from Reproach, and ſtop the Mouths of all the *Diſſenters* againſt her Practice; *Now is their Time*; not by Condemning, Cenſuring, and Diſcouraging Prophane Atheiſtical, Heretical, and Erroneous Books only, but by reviving the Exceſſent Diſcipline of the Church, and Purging her of a Scandalous, Ignorant, Inſufficient, and Aminable Clergy —— Nor let any Man call me an Enemy of the Church on this Account; I am of Opinion, I cannot do a greater Service to the Church of *England*, or give a greater Blow to her Enemies, than to provoke them to Diſcipline, and to obtain of the Convocation, that the Drunken, Swearing, Blaſpheming, Inceſtuous Wretches, that now poſſeſs Benefices in the Church, and have the Care of Souls, ſhould be driven from the Altar, and no more defile Holy Things with their Polluted Hands—And I am ready at any Time to put it to the Teſt, whether I have been forward to expoſe the Clergy, or tender of them; and this by procuring a Dreadful Liſt of ſuch Criminals, and ſuch Crimes, as I ſee no Reaſon to believe any other Proteſtant Church can be charg'd with, and letting the World ſee I have hitherto conceal'd it, in hopes the Time ſhould once come, that they ſhall either reform, or be extruded from the Sacred Office, by the Authority of a reviv'd Diſcipline.

This I ſpeak of Credit call'd Reputation, and of this I ſhall not fail to ſpeak in its turn; but I am now *to ſpeak of CREDIT —— Properly ſo call'd*, the ſame which I have been long Repreſenting to you, under the Emblem of *a Vertuous Lady, Credit*, of Loans, Funds, Taxes, Stocks, Governments, Parliaments; the Time is now come, we muſt leave off Similies and Allegories, and ſpeak to the Point with all poſſible plainneſs, in which I doubt not, the Parliament ſhall ſee ſo much ſincere deſire for the Publick Good, that my plainneſs ſhall be no Ways offenſive to them —— And firſt, in what I have to ſay on this Head of Credit, I would be glad to diſtinguiſh my ſelf right, *as to Parties*; I have nothing to ſay to the Changes that have been made; 'tis neither my Duty, or my Buſineſs to judge of Perſons, nor is my Opinion neceſſary to be given; all Men know I ſerv'd the Old, *now turn'd-out Party*, and had the Power to diſmiſs them attended my Suffrage, not a Tory in the Nation had come in their Places, I believ'd the General Security was Eſtabliſh'd, and dreaded the Change; *what I was, I am*, and ſhall die

die, till Truth appears on another Side—— And this is enough for me to say,

But what this has to do in this Case of Credit, *I own I do not see* ——— It has indeed Wounded our Credit; the *Changes* in State, the letting loose the *Rabbles*, the *Breaches* of the *Peace*, the *Distractions* attending these Things, have Wounded and Frighted the Publick Credit——— But let these Changes lie how they will, *Credit must not die*, it must be enquir'd into, settled, and restor'd, or we are all undone, and can never be retriev'd——Without *Credit*, we can neither make War, nor make Peace; we can neither Trade, nor live without Trade; neither go Abroad nor stay at Home; we are muzzl'd in our Commerce, ty'd Hand and Foot in our Politicks, and in short, are given up to our Enemies.

I lay it therefore down as a Fundamental, that come what will, and come who will, *Credit must be upheld*, Credit must be Maintain'd, or all is lost, and the very Welfare of the Nation, depends upon the Credit of the Nation; *Tories are Mad*, if they Ruin Credit, for they hope to keep the Administration, and a dull Business that will be without Credit; *Whigs are Mad*, if they Ruin Credit, for they cut their own Throats when they do it; they make way to their own Destruction, three parts of four of the Funds being in their Hands; and the little Step those Gentlemen have made that Way, has put much of the Stocks, and that at a low Price too, into the Hands of their Enemies, the *Tories* ——— *The Poor* must help to support *Credit*, *for* it is by this, they get Work in their respective Trades, and earn Money to Maintain their Families; *the middle kind of People* must support *Credit*, because by it, all the Foreign Negoce in the World, is supported and carry'd on ——— By which they Trade, support Manufactures, and enrich their Families; the Rich must support Credit, because by it, their Money is improv'd, Interest for Money lent out is rais'd, Rents of Lands and Tenements paid, and the Poor kept from devouring; the Government must support Credit, for by this, Trade is carry'd on, which pays all the Customs, Excises, and Duties, by which Government is Supported, and the Publick Expence defray'd: The *Parliament* must Support *Credit*, for, by this, Taxes are made easie, heavy Burthens made light, and such prodigious Sums rais'd, as could no way be possible, to be levy'd in Specie.

Thus *Whig* and *Tory*, *Poor* and *Rich*, *Government* and *Parliament*, all are under indisputable Necessities of Supporting *Credit* ——— This mighty Thing call'd *Credit*, is an unvaluable Treasure to them all, every one Courts it, tho' so few come to a right Understanding about it; and indeed the mistakes about the Necessity of Supporting Credit, are the only Reasons, why some Men in their Flegmaticks about Court Changes, and the Tyranny of Parties, became careless of the Nation's Credit, or rather willing the Credit should sink—— Of these, as our Blessed Saviour most *Charitably pray'd for the mistaken Jews* ——— So I Pray ——— May they be *forgiven, for they know not what they do.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *Author of this Paper having receiv'd many importunate Letters a long time, pressing him to go on with his so often promis'd Discourses upon Trade*—— *Gives this Notice.*

That having often Essay'd to carry on a continu'd Discourse upon Trade in this Paper, but been unavoidably prevented by the Fury of the Times, an unhappiness the Author did not foresee when this Work was undertaken ——— *And finding it impossible to have his Essays upon Trade pursu'd in this Paper, in such an uninterrupted Manner as a Subject of that Consequence requires; some Gentlemen, who desire that Work to be carried on, have made a Proposal, for the Writing a REVIEW to be entirely taken up upon the Subject of Trade, with a* Miscellany, *or a part reserv'd to handle*

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This Work is propos'd to be Subscrib'd by such Gentlemen as think fit to encourage it, 'till it may be able to support it self; in which the Author hopes he may please you all, and may have an opportunity to lay down the unpleasant Subject of the Nation's Divisions; a Thing he has long desir'd to do.

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